

SPECIAL EDITION 2006

# WARRIORS

Quarterly Magazine for the Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs





## A Final Salute to Our Fallen Warriors

On January 7, 2006, four Soldiers of B Company, 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation, Alaska National Guard, lost their lives in a Black Hawk helicopter crash near the Iraqi town of Tal Afar. "Icy 33" was one of two aircraft conducting night operations.

First Lieutenant Jaime Campbell, Chief Warrant Officer Four Chester Troxel, Specialist Michael Edwards and Specialist Jacob Melson were among a dozen people who lost their lives that night.

We have prepared this Special Edition of *Warriors Magazine* to honor our friends and comrades. Our cover of four gold stars – a tradition dating back to World War II – heralds their patriotic service, heroism and selflessness. We remember them as a sister, as brothers, as our friends ... most of all, they remain as our family ... a gold star honors each.

On Sunday, January 29, 2006, the Alaska National Guard hosted a modest, yet public memorial ceremony in the Atwood Concert Hall of the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts in Anchorage. The program was hosted by Major General Craig Campbell, the Adjutant General, with Chaplain (Major) Rick Koch as emcee. The heartfelt remarks of each speaker are provided within this

commemorative. We've also republished *Lives of Service, Devotion; Lives That Mattered*, which originally appeared in the Ketchikan and Anchorage daily newspapers.

As a matter of interest, nearly 2,000 family members and friends attended (the ceremony) in person. Tens of thousands of their fellow Alaskans tuned in to the live statewide radio and television broadcasts. A satellite link was provided for many of our Alaska National Guard Soldiers in Iraq and Kuwait.

Many volunteers and sponsors stepped forward to support the broadcasts as well as this publication. Many of their business names are noted elsewhere within the magazine. We express our sincere gratitude to them and to so many others who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to help in any and all ways they could. We also note the tremendous support we received from our fellow Alaskans in the recent days and weeks in the aftermath of this event. On behalf of the Soldiers and Airmen of our entire Alaska National Guard, and all of our family members, thank you.

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Remembering  
Second Lieutenant Genevieve Harper  
Recalling – First Lieutenant Jaime Campbell

Chief Warrant Officer Three Steve Lewis  
Recalling – Chief Warrant Officer Four  
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**"ICY 33" Remembered.** First Lieutenant Jaime Campbell, Chief Warrant Officer Four Chester Troxel, Specialist Michael Edwards and Specialist Jacob Melson gave the ultimate sacrifice in the War on Terror while serving in Iraq. Alaskans joined together to honor the lives of these brave Soldiers of the Alaska Army National Guard on Sunday, January 29, 2006, in a live statewide broadcast from the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts in Anchorage. The Alaska Broadcasters Association, joined by KTUU Channel 2, the 25 stations of the Alaska Public Radio Network, KENI and KNOM commercial radio stations, and KT00-TV's Gavel to Gavel, were among the broadcasters that aired the program. AT&T Alascom provided a live link to members of the Alaska National Guard serving in Iraq and Kuwait. Many others donated time and resources to ensure the success of the memorial ceremony. Photo: Mark Farmer, topcover.com

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#### HOW TO REACH US

**Letters:** Letters to the editor must be signed and include the writer's full name and mailing address. Letters should be brief and are subject to editing. **Submissions:** Print and visual submissions of general interest to our diverse civilian employees, Alaska National Guard military members,

veterans and families are invited and encouraged. Please send articles and photos with name, phone number, e-mail, complete mailing address and comments to:

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**Major General Craig E. Campbell**

Adjutant General, Alaska National Guard

& Commissioner, Alaska Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## Lives of Service, Devotion; Lives That Mattered

Just after midnight, on the morning of January 7 (Iraq Time), Alaska lost four of our finest citizens. They died serving America in Iraq aboard an Alaska Army National Guard UH-60L Black Hawk helicopter while on a routine mission near Tal Afar, Iraq. These four individuals represented the best of America and are truly national heroes.

Soldiers have died in war as long as civilizations have employed conflict as a means to implement policy.

Soldiers train for war, but pray for peace because each knows that war is not the answer.

We, in the service of arms, also understand that battle sometimes becomes necessary, especially when others initiate hostile actions against our nation.

America was attacked on September 11, 2001, and nearly 3,000 innocent people were slaughtered, not by a nation or government, but by a radical terrorist movement determined to destroy America and all that this great nation represents. We are now engaged in a protracted struggle to ensure that the freedoms achieved over the past 230 years are not lost.

First Lieutenant Jaime Campbell, Chief Warrant Officer Four Chester Troxel, Specialist Michael Edwards and Specialist Jacob Melson, honorably served in the Alaska Army National Guard. They were Citizen Soldiers of the first order. They were volunteers because they wanted to serve our country.

Today there is no military draft. Those who serve do so as volunteers. And those who serve in America's oldest military establishment, the National Guard, uphold the highest tradition established over 365 years ago when the first state militia was mustered to defend the colonists.

These four Alaskan Soldiers clearly understood why they were serving in Iraq. What they were doing was important.

While we pause to grieve the loss of these great Alaskans, do not forget to honor their service. They leave us their legacy of patriotism, sacrifice, selfless-service and devotion to duty.

What they accomplished in their lives to protect American freedoms should never be forgotten. As you remember them, also remember their families. They leave behind husbands, wives, parents, brothers, sisters and children. They leave behind friends and neighbors, fellow students, colleagues, co-workers and teammates. Most of all, though, they leave us with fitting memories of honor and courage.

It is in these vivid life-filled memories of what these Soldiers accomplished that provides comfort to us in this tragic time of loss.

We know of their great characters, their individual personalities and their unity of purpose and devotion to one another and their missions. We know, beyond any doubt, that their sacrifice significantly contributed to keeping the star of liberty shining bright across America. We know that they did not pass in vain; they made a simple, yet eternal contribution to the advancement of freedom and justice as well.

Like their immediate families, we shall always remember each of these Soldiers – Jaime, Chester, Mike and Jake. We will recall our

service, our fun times and we will honor them. For us, they will remain in their prime, as it was when we last gazed upon them.

Author James Michener had it right in his book, *Tales of the South Pacific*. To paraphrase: "They will live a long time, these Soldiers of the Alaska Army National Guard. They had an Alaska quality. They, like their victories – will be remembered."

The Alaska Army National Guard honored these four Soldiers with a memorial ceremony on January 29, 2006, in the Atwood Theater of the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts in Anchorage. This event was open to the public, and as we expected, the theater filled to capacity. Please keep our fallen Soldiers and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

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*Author James Michener  
had it right in his book,  
Tales of the South Pacific.  
To paraphrase:  
"They will live a long time,  
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Alaska Army National Guard.  
They had an Alaska quality  
They, like their victories –  
will be remembered."*



# Remembering...

**Colonel R. Stephen Williams**

Commander, 207th Infantry Brigade (Scout)



Ladies and Gentlemen, today is a day of remembering, remembering our Citizen Soldiers, our Alaska Guardsmen. As a State, we honor these four heroes.

For the families of these Soldiers, we cannot bear, as you do, the full impact of this loss. But, we're thinking about you so very much.

Your loved ones were daring and brave and they had that special grace, that special spirit that says – give me a challenge and I'll meet it with joy and a smile.

They wished to serve and they did, they served all of us – they are true American heroes, they are American Soldiers.

When I think of our service men and women an unprecedented speech rings true even today. It was given by General Douglas MacArthur May 12, 1962, to the cadets of West Point, it lays tribute to our profession of arms and immortalizes the emotion of those who have served in combat. I quote:

"What sort of Soldiers are those you lead. Their story is known to all of you. It is the story for the American at Arms. My estimate of them was formed on the battlefield many, many years ago and has never changed. I regarded him then as I regard him now as one of the world's noblest figures, not only as one of the finest military characters but also as one of the most stainless. Their name and fame

are the birthright of every American citizen, in their youth and strength, love and loyalty; they gave all that mortality can give. They need no eulogy from me or from any other man. They have written history and written it red on their enemy's breast.

"I do not know the dignity of their birth but I do know the glory of their death. They died unquestioning, uncompaining with faith in their hearts and on their lips the hope we would go on to victory."

The crew of Icy 33: First Lieutenant Jaime Campbell, Chief Warrant Officer Four Chester Troxel, Specialist Michael Edwards and Specialist Jacob Melson honored us by the manner in which they lived their lives.

Strengthened by their courage, heartened by their valor, and borne by their memory, let us continue to stand for the ideals for which they lived and died.

We will never forget them nor the last time we saw them; either at the Army Guard airfield preparing for a UH-60 training mission, or boarding the flight departing Alaska for Iraq.

These Alaska Soldiers are part of a roll call of honor. Their names will speak of pride and service with other names from history's past. They are heroes, Alaskans, American Soldiers – and they will not be forgotten. Thank you.



Getting Ready For Deployment. Soldiers of the B Company, 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation, flew their UH-60L Black Hawk helicopters in a 10-ship formation to Elmendorf Air Force Base prior to their deployment to Iraq in the fall of 2005. Photo: Major Mike Haller, JFHQ-AK Public Affairs

# First Lieutenant Jaime Campbell

June 14, 1980 - January 7, 2006







Second Lieutenant Genevieve Harper: Jaime Campbell is the daughter of Jeff and Miki Krausse. She was one of three girls. Jaime's father is an Army Command Sergeant Major who just returned from his own tour in Iraq, where she was able to show her father what a great pilot she was by flying him to his destinations. I know that she will be missed dearly by her family, but they are very proud of her accomplishments. Campbell was the Washington state rodeo queen in 1998, the same year she graduated from Ephrata High School as student body president. She joined the Washington Army National Guard midway through her studies at Washington State University to help pay for school, and graduated with a degree in Interior Design in 2003.

She was married to Captain Samuel Campbell, and stationed at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, when she became part of the Alaska National Guard family.

I have spent many sleepless nights trying to think of the perfect words to describe Jaime Campbell. The more I thought about it the list got longer and harder to define; the most perfect words are not good enough to describe Jaime. You see, Jaime was kind to everyone no matter who they were or what rank they may be wearing. Jaime always had a smile on her face, never complained and definitely never gave up.

I met Jaime a couple of years ago when I was a Sergeant and she was a brand new Second Lieutenant.

She sat with me and talked about how she was enlisted before, where she had gone to school, and sharing with one another stories of how each of us had met our husbands. Jaime was very anxious to go back to school and become a Black Hawk pilot. You see, at the time flight school was hard to get into. Jaime never once let it get her down; in fact, she did the opposite and used her ambition to drive her. I would ask Jaime if they had gotten her a flight slot; she would say, "not yet, but I call the Battalion Commander once a week to see if I have a school date." I thought she was kidding – but she wasn't; she figured they would get her a school date or get tired of hearing from her weekly and stop answering the phone. She handled the frustrations with grace and much humor. Then the day came, after many months of being persistent she called and said to me, "I am leaving in August."

At Christmas time Jaime came home to visit and I didn't know she was in town yet until I heard someone yelling "Ward, Harper, Genevieve,"...after finally running out of names for me I turned with caution and there was Jaime headed towards me with a great tan from Alabama and a warm smile and a big hug. She was glowing with excitement; she expressed how much it meant to be home with her husband Sam. Jaime always expressed how much she loved her husband Sam and missed him so much when they were apart.

Jaime touched many people, and like I said before, she never segregated herself from the enlisted. You see there was a six month train-up that the Soldiers went through before being deployed and she always made it a point to spend time eating, going to the movies and laughing with the four other Soldiers from Fairbanks, Alaska: Sergeant Kimberly Ruffner, Specialist Carl Gilmore, Specialist Karen Webb and Specialist Michael Edwards.

Jaime may no longer be with us here today in body, but her spirit will live on and the wonderful memories will last forever. I would like to share a poem, please listen carefully and remember that Jaime Campbell was PROUD to be an American Soldier and a Black Hawk pilot. I know her family holds their collective heads high with pride and admiration for their daughter that gave her life for her country.

## **In Your Honor**

*By an Unknown Author*

Unselfishly, you left your fathers and your mothers,  
You left behind your sisters and your brothers,  
Leaving your beloved children, husbands, and wives,  
You put on hold, your dreams – your lives.

On foreign soil, you found yourself planted  
To fight for those whose freedom you granted.  
Without your sacrifice, their cause would be lost  
But you carried onward, no matter the cost.

Many horrors you had endured and seen.  
Many faces had haunted your dreams,  
You cheered as your enemies littered the ground;  
You cried as your brothers fell all around.

When it was over, you all came back home,  
Some were left with memories to face all alone;  
Some found themselves in the company of friends  
As their crosses cast shadows across the land.

Those who survived were forever scarred  
Emotionally, physically, permanently marred.  
Those who did not now sleep eternally  
'Neath the ground they had given their lives to keep free.

With a hand upon my heart, I feel the pride and respect;  
My reverence is revealed in the tears  
That stream down my upturned face  
As our flag waves above you, in her glory and grace.

Freedom was the gift that you unselfishly gave,  
Pain and death was the price that you ultimately paid.  
Every day, I give my utmost admiration  
To those who had fought to defend our nation.

# Chief Warrant Officer Four Chester Troxel October 8, 1961 - January 7, 2006







I am CW3 Steve Lewis. I am currently deployed with B Co to Q-West, Iraq.

I have known Chester Troxel for almost 17 years; and while we have been friends and professional colleagues for most of that time, we did not become close like brothers until we mobilized and deployed to Iraq last summer.

I have always been intrigued by Chet because he seemed to always have a good grasp on what was right and had no tribulations with letting his colleagues know how he felt.

We all remember the passionate and assertive Chester; and while his main nickname was Corporate, QC – Mr. Quality Control – I feel, fit him best.

Just weeks before the crash, Chester, with Jimmy, John and myself, sat around under the camouflaged netted compound talking lightly one morning over coffee about how we wanted to be memorialized – if that time ever came.

It was unanimous among us that we all wanted to be remembered as the real people that we were – not some ideal human abstraction... but... remembered with love – with our faults.

For Chet this is easy; for he was the professional and he truly lived an honorable life as a Soldier, an impressive aviator, a loyal friend and of course a loving husband to Sheree and a very proud father to Summer and Hollis.

The man loved to fly and would have flown nearly every day if the regulations had let him. He was the ex officio unit trainer – and when you met his mark, you knew that you could call yourself a true aviator. When he recommended me for advancement to pilot-in-command, I knew I had met a very high standard, indeed.

Aviators, as you know, are always striving for excellence. Our company often muses that the definition of a nanosecond is the time it takes to screw up and for someone to point it out.

But Chester's warmer side would often come to the rescue of junior members who were learning something new and needed a chance to learn without the nanosecond getting in the way.

I can still almost hear Chet greeting us affectionately as "Mister" while coming into our hooch to talk – and often pawing through our care packages looking for new snacks and always more hazelnut creamer – the substance he referred to as FooFoo, that he loved in his coffee.

Chet loved the Soldiers in Rawah and Mosul, and many were actually from the 172nd Stryker Brigade here in Alaska. He sought to be attached to them and even put the 172nd emblem on our aircraft. He was very proud to be a Soldier.

And just a month or so ago we had a mission to fly fresh food to the Soldiers and Marines working in the desert outpost of Rawah near the Syrian border. But when we arrived at Mosul Airfield there was no cargo waiting for us.

Chet, though, was unwilling to drop the mission and have the troops go without their weekly allotment of fresh food. He went looking for the supply folks and in less than an hour he had fished up enough supplies that we had to lay on an additional leg to Rawah that day. I know the troops appreciated that. And that was the kind of guy Chester was, doing what rightly needed to be done.

It may have been the same trip to Rawah that I remember flying at 150 feet – the hard deck during the day; it's 300 at night (the altitude not to go below).

I had actually been transitioning between 170 and 130 feet when Chet said, "What's the hard deck?"

I said, "150."

Chet said, "Then get the HECK up there!"

That was Chet. He was never shy.

We had access to the Internet for communication with our families, partly because Chet stepped up to the bat. We purchased a satellite unit with personal funds and while Jake Melson and I took care of the technical aspects of the network, it was Chet working with his wife Sheree back here in the states who did the paperwork. Chet knew how important it was to us to have good communication with our families because he felt the same way.

Chet talked about his family and their plans often. We were both scheduled to leave on mid tour R&R at the same time. And Chester, not wanting to disrupt his Anchorage household, had planned on meeting his son Hollis in Paris for a kind of send your kid off into adulthood trip. He'll now miss that trip, but you should know that the trip was more than just a trip. Summer, yours was coming too.

Sheree and his kids were often in Chet's thoughts. And as other friends have told stories of Chester biking with his wife around the neighborhood so they could both enjoy the summertime sun.

And pictures of his wife and kids could always be found hanging around his mirror in his hooch.

Chester, you will be missed like no one else. And like you would want, we will continue with you, Jaime, Mike and Jake in our hearts as we continue our missions and our lives.

We love you and we'll miss you, Mister.





Hello. I am Sergeant Corwin Viglione of B Company, 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation. I am currently deployed to Iraq and I am home on Rest and Relaxation. Shortly after I arrived home I was asked to do Michael Edward's eulogy, of which I am honored.

I didn't know Mike very long; I met him when our unit was activated last June, (and even though I didn't know Mike very long) he made a lasting impression on me.

Every morning before formation in the parking lot, many of us would wander around with our morning coffee and talk to one another. This is how I got to know Mike.

With the morning small talk, I found out where Mike was from, where he grew up, and what he did for a living. I found out that Mike had been in the active duty Army in Fairbanks. He worked with Lieutenant (now Captain) Anderson, one of my co-workers, at the Army Aviation Support Facility at Bryant Army Guard Heliport in Anchorage.

As time went by we continued our training and through this process we got to know each other even better.

We got to know each other on a personal note; we got to learn about each other's personal lives, our likes and dislikes. Working together from day-to-day we got to know each other's work ethics – Mike's was unsurpassed.

We were assigned an aircraft to maintain and Mike took pride in his. When Mike was finished with his, he would ask if anyone needed a helping hand.

After our training was complete, it came time to ship out. We would be flying aboard an Air Force C-5 Galaxy transport plane with our equipment. I was on Chalk Three along with Tony, Chewy and Mike, just to name a few. It was a long flight but finally we made it to our first destination, Rota, Spain.

A few of us joked around about being stuck in Rota, and to our surprise we were. We were stuck for two nights – and three days. Soon after we got our room assignments we went to the Naval Exchange and purchased shorts and t-shirts. We were ready for the sun and the beach.

Our Chalk leaders wanted to make sure that we didn't go anywhere alone and that we had a battle buddy. Tony and I stayed together and Mike stayed with Chewy. After our (safety) briefing by our Chalk leaders we changed and scattered into the wind. Tony and I went to the beach. Chewy and Mike walked to town.

After walking a while Tony and I decided to take a break and sit down. While sitting down enjoying the beautiful beach we saw a couple of guys walking towards us. It was Mike and Chewy. As they got closer, they pulled up chairs and kept us company. The four of us laughed and joked for hours on the beach, and even watched the sunset. That is a memory I will never forget – sitting on the beautiful beach with my friends, with Mike.

Well, the fun had to end, and the Air force fixed our C-5 and we were off to Kuwait. I don't remember how

long we were in Kuwait, but it felt like forever. Eventually, we got the word that we were going to fly to Q-West.

Shortly after arriving in Q-West I found out that I would be moving to Forward Operating Base Courage in Mosul, along with a handful of others. We were going to be the palace crew. Our mission would be to fly the generals and VIPs.

After hearing this news I wondered how I would be able to take pictures of the Company if I am in Mosul. When we were activated last June, Captain Andersen found out I had an interest in photography and asked if I would be the company photographer, which I gladly accepted. But moving to Mosul made this task a little more challenging.

On occasion we would fly to Q-West for maintenance; and I took my camera. There would be times when we would be taxiing the Black Hawk and I would see someone cleaning the aircraft. As we got closer to our parking spot, I recognized the person. It was Mike. He would be the only one on the flight line working all by himself on his aircraft, of which he took great pride.

Once in awhile we would have high profile VIPs, which required a Black Hawk from Q-West. We had such visitors as: Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Chief of Staff of the Army General Schoomaker – all of which Mike was a part of. When we flew General Schoomaker, Mike was a part of that crew from Q-West. In between flights we would joke and laugh as we usually did.

But it came time to bring the general back to the airport, and after dropping off our passengers a major approached me and handed me a plastic bag. He told me to make sure the other flight crews get one. I looked in the bag and saw it was General Schoomaker's coins; they were in the shape of identification tags and had a hole so they could be worn with them. I gave the major thumbs up and said I would take care of it.

At Mosul Air Field I had a few minutes, so I grabbed that bag and went towards the other aircraft. As I approached the Crew Chief, I saw it was Mike. I handed him the bag and told him to make sure everyone got one. Mike had a curious look on his face; he could barely hear me over the helicopter. I got closer and told him, "Hey they are coins from General Schoomaker, make sure everyone gets one." Mike's face quickly changed from curiosity to surprise. I guess he was excited to receive a coin.

That was the last time I saw Mike.

At the memorial service in Q-West, Mike's M4 had his ID tags – with that coin. I also have one of those coins, and when I look at mine I don't see a general's coin. I see a hard worker, a fellow National Guardsman, and most of all, I see my friend, Mike.

Even though Mike is gone, he is deeply missed and will never be forgotten.







Good Afternoon. My name is Tim McCormick, and I'm honored and proud to be here while on leave from Iraq on the behalf of Jake Melson.

Not only was Jake a really good friend to me, but he was someone I looked forward to flying with. Jake never really let any of the stresses of everyday life in Iraq or anything like that ever get to him. He had a sense of peace that surrounded him, and always brought that peace with him when you were around him.

Jake was always there for any one.

If he wasn't flying or playing his X-Box (in which he would kick everyone's butt in Halo), he would be there to help you with whatever was needed. Whether it was helping us to unload the aircraft after a mission, or helping us with our computers, or even getting our Internet up and running, he would be there with a big ole' smile on face.

I remember when we just got our Army combat uniforms for the deployment and First Sergeant Jones had said that we couldn't wear them until he gives us permission to do so. Well, I don't think Jake really heard that; because the next day he was the only one in formation wearing the new uniform, but that was Jake.

I also remember one day while we were mobilizing and he came in after a weekend off and told us that he had just gotten married; and that smile on his face was priceless.

We asked him why he didn't say anything about it to us, and he said he just wanted family and friends there.

Every time he would mention his wife he had this biggest smile on his face; it was like a kid in a candy store for the first time, smiling from ear-to-ear. He also had that same ear-to-ear smile when he would talk about his mom and dad and the rest of his family. That was the only time that he would have that kind of smile.

Jake really loved to fly. He's just like the rest of us; he really enjoyed the thrill and excitement of being up in the air. There was nobody that could ever take that away from Jake.

His love of life, his love of flying and the aircraft, his love of his wife, his love of his mom and dad and his family, and everyone around him is going to be deeply missed.

Jake, you were an awesome friend and I will never forget you, and you will always be in my heart. And from everyone in Bravo Company 1/207th Arctic Cowboys who were not able to be here because of our mission in Iraq, they send their condolences and prayers to the families.

And in closing, I would like to say goodbye to the crew of "ICY 33."

- First Lieutenant Campbell
- Chief Warrant Officer Four Troxel
- Specialist Edwards
- Specialist Melson

You will be deeply missed and we will never forget you.

## SweetTart

*Lyrics by Sarah Melson*

Where do I go from here?  
There's so much that's been said and done  
I just lost a battle but I won't lose the war,  
Thanks to you, by my side

Who said anything about a knight in shining armor?  
My prince charming is a soldier wearing cammo  
People say good things come to those who wait,  
And look at me, I got you

You're my strength, my support,  
I could never ask for more  
Miles apart you still watch over me.  
Your love is amazing; you never give up on me.  
You're the only thing I need; you're the love of my life  
My SweetTart

My love is for you alone,  
I can give it to no other  
Because you've filled that empty place in my heart  
I don't know what I'd do without you  
I'd miss out on the man of my dreams, my soul mate

There's so much to be said about how strong our love is  
Your tenderness it melts my heart and soul  
Your gentle kiss it takes my breath away  
And I thank God every day for blessing me with you

You're my strength, my support, I could never ask for more  
Miles apart you still watch over me  
Your love is amazing; you never give up on me  
You're the only thing I need; you're the love of my life,  
My SweetTart

I can't ignore the dreams I have  
When I'm asleep or when I'm awake  
They never seem to change day to day  
Growing old with you is all I see in my future  
I hope the dreams I'm having become reality because

You're my strength, my support, I could never ask for more  
Miles apart you still watch over me  
Your love is amazing; you never give up on me  
You're the only thing I need; you're the love of my life  
My SweetTart



# The Last Salute

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The Last Salute. The fallen warrior display is a time honored military tradition with poignant symbolism. Inverted rifles with empty magazines and buried bayonets signify that the Soldiers who once carried these weapons will fight no more. Their helmets, identification tags and boots represent their personal sacrifice. We build this monument today as Soldiers have done before us . . . to honor their final, full measure of selfless devotion to their families and each of us; to honor their duty . . . to our country . . . to Alaska . . . and to the simple freedom and liberty for all. This display was put together by the Soldiers of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, in Iraq, to provide a "last salute" to their fallen comrades.



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# High Flight

*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;*

*Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds – and done a hundred things  
You have not dreamed of – wheeled and soared and swung*

*High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,  
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of air:*

*Up, up the long delirious, burning blue  
I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace  
Where never lark, or even eagle flew.*

*And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod  
The high untresspassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.*

John Gillespie Magee, Jr. – Pilot Officer, 412 Squadron, Royal Canadian Air Force  
Royal Canadian Air Force Pilot John Magee was only nineteen years old when he wrote the poem *High Flight* in 1941. Born in Shanghai and educated at Rugby School in England, Magee showed early promise as a poet. Impatient to take part in the war raging in Europe, Magee gave up a place at Yale University to enlist in the RCAF. Not long after writing *High Flight*, John Magee was killed in an air accident in Britain. Since its publication in a church bulletin, *High Flight* has become the anthem for all who love to fly.

